

## Georgia Greenspace Program

Georgia Senate Bill 399 establishes a framework within which rapidly developing counties and their municipalities can preserve community greenspace. It promotes the adoption, by such counties and cities, of policies and rules that will enable them to preserve and permanently protect at least 20 percent of their land area as connected and open greenspace to be used for *informal* recreation and natural resource protection.

*Amount:* Funds allocated to the City of Atlanta from Fulton and DeKalb counties were based on the percent of total population per jurisdiction. The City received funds in 2001 and 2002 as shown in the following table. The Georgia State Legislature de-funded the program for 2003 and 2004. The 2004 State Legislature will determine whether to once again fund the program for 2005.

**Georgia Greenspace Program Grant Awards to City of Atlanta**

	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Fulton</b>	\$2,677,143	\$2,377,611	\$5,054,754
<b>DeKalb</b>	\$ 191,349	\$ 149,335	\$ 340,684
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2,868,492</b>	<b>\$2,526,946</b>	<b>\$5,395,438</b>

*Greenspace Definition:* The Georgia Greenspace Program defines greenspace as “...permanently protected land and water, including agricultural and forestry land whose development rights have been severed from the property, that is in its undeveloped, natural state or that has been developed only to the extent consistent with, or is restored to be consistent with, one or more of the following goals:”

1. Water quality protection for rivers, streams, and lakes;
2. Flood protection;
3. Wetlands protection;
4. Reduction of erosion through protection of steep slopes, areas with erodible soils and stream banks;
5. Protection of riparian buffers and other areas such as marsh hammocks that serve as natural habitat and corridors for native plant and animal species;
6. Scenic protection;
7. Protection of archaeological and historic resources;
8. Provision of recreation in the form of boating, hiking, camping, fishing, hunting, running, jogging, biking, walking, skating, birding, riding horses, observing or photographing nature, picnicking, playing non-organized sports, or engaging in free play; and
9. Connection of existing or planned areas contributing to the goals set out in this paragraph.

*Limitations:* Certain uses will keep greenspace from being counted toward the local government's greenspace goal and will make property ineligible for purchase with monies from the State Fund. Examples include, but are not limited to: sidewalks along roads or streets; fields for organized competitive sports, golf courses, swimming pools, amphitheaters, and the surface area of

manmade water bodies that are individually larger than 500 acres. Also included are capital improvements needed to support such facilities, such as parking lots and buildings, as well as sewer-line rights-of-way, if the city has only the right to install and maintain the lines but does not have the right to protect riparian habitat or allow public recreational access within the right-of-way.

*Public Access Type:* Passive recreation (boating, hiking, camping, fishing, hunting, running, jogging, biking, walking, skating, birding, riding horses, observing or photographing nature, picnicking, playing non-organized sports, engaging in free play, and access to historic or archeological resources). Public access is not necessary for property to be counted as greenspace.

*Links*

[Georgia Greenspace Program](#)

[City Council Resolution 00-R-1869](#) adopting the City of Atlanta's application to the Georgia Greenspace Program